

Colleton Soil & Water Conservation District

Annual Report 2005-2006

531 Robertson Blvd., Suite B Walterboro, SC 29488

August 2006

Board of Commissioners

I. M. Benton, Chairman
Deborah Blankenship, Vice Chairman
Cleveland Hiott III, Secretary/Treasurer
Marion Rizer, Commissioner
Roger Harriett, Commissioner
Henry Pinckney, Associate Commissioner
Reverend Gerald T. Mabry, Chaplain

Staff

Sharon Hrvol, Administrative Assistant

SC Department of Natural Resources

Lindsay White, Programs Coordinator

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Fred Tritapoe, District Conservationist

Eddie Mitchell, Soil Conservation Tech.

The Colleton Soil and Water Conservation District takes pride in presenting the 2005-2006 Annual Report. The activities of the conservation district are governed by a five-member board of commissioners of which two are appointed by the state, and three are elected in the general election. The conservation district works closely with federal and state partners to provide assistance in natural resources conservation throughout Colleton County. The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service provides technical support to the district. The SC Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water, and Conservation Division employ a Programs Coordinator to provide education and information support to the conservation district.

Edna B. Carroll named Conservationist of the Year



Annually, the Colleton Soil and Water Conservation District recognizes an individual for his or her achievements in the field of conservation. This year, we are proud to recognize Edna B. Carroll, as 2005 Conservationist of the Year. She has for years practiced what she truly believes is the protection of our natural resources. Through managing primarily for wildlife, she has always considered the consequences of her decisions and how they would effect other natural resources such as the soil, water, air, plant population, and last but not least, her neighbors.

Mrs. Carroll's operation consists of managing 2200 acres of timber, 80~90 acres of Wildlife Food plots, 10 acres of fishponds, 100 acres of strips used primarily for upland birds. She is a participant in the Conservation Reserve Program, and has 145 acres enrolled where longleaf pine trees have been established. She also has 100 acres enrolled in this same program where she manages

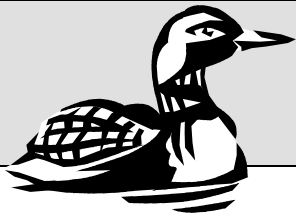
native cover strips for quail habitat. Mrs. Carroll was born in Rum Gully, and reared in Colleton County. She is a member of Smoaks Baptist Church and is married to Joe W. Carroll. They have 2 daughters, Tammy Hall of Smoaks, and Debbie Dickerson of Franklin, Tennessee, and 4 grandsons.

The 2005 Outstanding Conservationist of the Year, Mrs. Edna B. Carroll exemplifies a life of giving and believes in the protection of our natural resource.

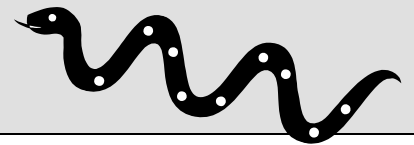
Kirby Player ~ Guest Speaker at the Annual Affiliate Members & Award Banquet

The Colleton Soil and Water Conservation District held their Annual Affiliate Banquet at Southland Restaurant on April 25, 2006. I. M. Benton, Chairman welcomed all affiliate members and guests. The guest speaker for the evening was Kirby Player. Mr. Player is the Coordinator of Alumni and Student Relations for the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences at Clemson University. He gave an entertaining presentation on how everyone should become involved in the Conservation of our Natural Resources – soil, water, air, forest, and wildlife. He encouraged the students that participated in the essay contest to continue to study and learn about our natural resources and to become better stewards of the land.

The Poster Contest winners were recognized and received ribbons. The Essay Contest winners for 2006 and the Conservationist of the Year for 2005 were honored with plaques. Chairman I. M. Benton thanked everyone for their continued support of the Colleton Soil and Water Conservation District.



2006 Earth Day Poster Contest "WILDLIFE IS EVERYWHERE"



The theme for our 2006 Earth Day Poster Contest was "Wildlife is Everywhere". Awards were presented to the winning classes by grade level. The participating teachers and their principals were recognized at the banquet. The winners at each grade level received a \$50.00 check and 1st place ribbon.

The winners were:

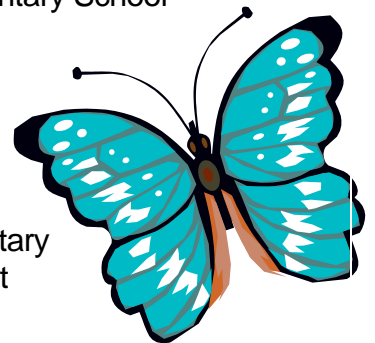
Mrs. Kathy Polk and Mrs. Mary Nesmith's kindergarten class at Forest Hills Elementary School

Mrs. Kathy Houck's 1st grade class at Colleton Prep Academy

Mrs. Margie Lemacks' 3rd grade class at Forest Hills Elementary School

Mr. Robert Tiegs' 1st period - 4th grade class at Forest Hills Elementary School

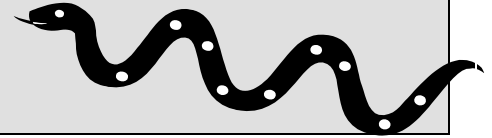
We would like to thank Ms. Gloria Valentine principal at Forest Hills Elementary School and Mr. Arthur Ellis headmaster at Colleton Prep Academy for their support





Conservation Essay Contest

"WILDLIFE IS EVERYWHERE"



The theme for our 2006 Earth Day Essay Contest was "Wildlife is Everywhere". Awards were presented to the following winners in the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th grades. First place winners received a plaque and a \$100.00 savings bond. Second place winners received a plaque and a \$50.00 saving bond. Third place winners received a plaque.

6th Grade Winners



First Place ~ Shane Lyons



Second Place ~ Meredith Matthews



Third Place ~ Tiffney Brown

7th Grade Winners



First Place ~ Cyne'a Blocker



Second Place ~ Anna Crosby

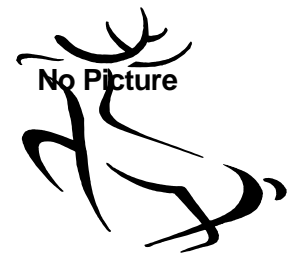


Third Place ~ Miranda Lawton

8th Grade Winners



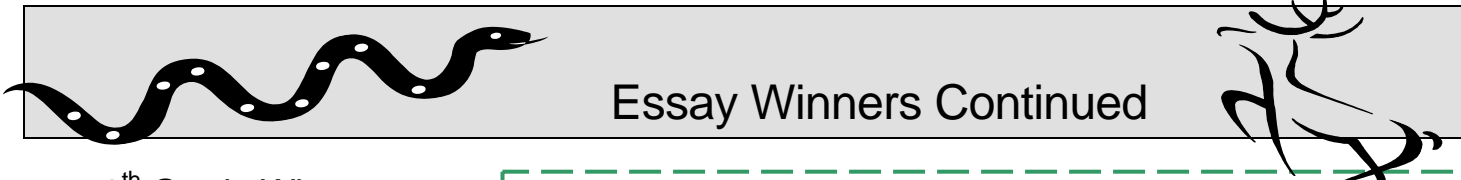
First Place ~ Brittany Elliott



Second Place ~ Megan Cain



Third Place ~ Sieta Pinckney



Essay Winners Continued

9th Grade Winner



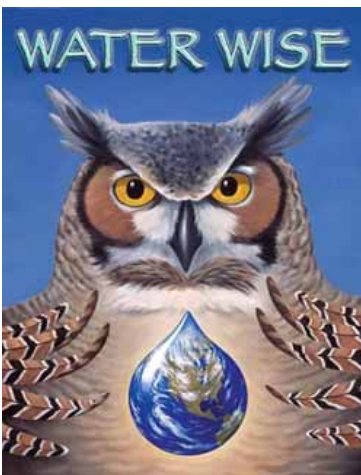
First Place ~ Samantha Shaw

Thank You

We would like to thank Ruffin Middle School teachers, Mrs. Kimberly Fee, Ms. Ann Robinson, Ms. Janet Strickland and Ms. Deborah Manigo, for encouraging their classes to participate in our essay contest, and also Principal Harry Jenkins for his support.

This year we had Home-school entries. We would like to thank Mrs. Debra Shaw for encouraging her daughter to enter our contest.

All Colleton County students in 6th ~ 9th grades are eligible to enter the essay contest.



2006 Soil & Water Stewardship Week

“Water Wise” was the theme for the 2006 Soil and Water Stewardship Week, April 30 through May 7, 2006. Each year the Colleton Conservation District celebrates this observance with area churches “to help remind us that we can take action every day to help conserve resources and improve the environment. Even small changes in our lifestyle can produce big results”. To save water we can take a shower instead of a bath, don’t run water while brushing teeth, check for leaky faucets and fix them, and plant native plants that don’t require watering. “To ensure future water supplies, we need to learn about water resources, and plan to use them carefully”.

This year Rev. Gerald Mabry organized a walking tour of the Great Swamp Sanctuary in Walterboro. Our Tour Guide was Mayor Charlie Sweat. Mayor Sweat spoke of the preservation of this historical area and how three creeks join inside the sanctuary to form the Ashepoo River, which is one of the major tributaries of the ACE Basin. He also pointed out that the Charleston to Savannah wagon road runs through the heart of the sanctuary. These old road beds have become an integral part of the miles of walking trails, and where bridges were we now have boardwalks and benches where one can sit and observe nature. The Great Swamp Sanctuary invites you see the beauty of nature. Mayor Sweat also spoke of the future plans for the Interpretive and Welcome Center. The Interpretive Center will provide programs in environmental education for students and all who wish to learn about nature and the importance of swamps in our area. The tour group enjoyed exploring the Great Swamp Sanctuary and they understand and appreciate Mayor Sweat dedication and vision for the area.



Great Swamp Sanctuary



Carolina Coastal Adventure

The Carolina Coastal Adventure is a three-day adventure for high school students in the 9th or 10th grade. The three days of activities included classroom instruction in water quality analysis and watersheds, canoeing in a cypress swamp at Santee Canal Park, and a tour of the Jeffries Steam Plant in Santee Circle. The Colleton Conservation District sponsors two students each year to attend this event in Berkeley County. Alicia Barnes and Amanda Wilson represented Colleton County in October 2005.

2006 South Carolina

Institute for Natural Resource Conservation

The South Carolina Institute for Natural Resources is held at Lander University. Lander is conducting the Institute in order to continue a tradition of environmental success that began with South Carolina's Soil and Water Conservation Districts. This is a one-week environmental education event that focuses heavily on experimental, hands-on learning. Field and laboratory studies are now a featured aspect of the curriculum. At the end of the week, a full four-year scholarship will be awarded through the Science Department of Lander University for Studies in Environmental Science to the top-scoring student. This year Colleton Soil and Water Conservation District sponsored John Gay McCullough. McCullough is a senior at Colleton Prep Academy and plans to continue his education in the Environmental Sciences.



LANDER UNIVERSITY



Beaver Dam at Willow Swamp

Nuisance Wildlife Program

The Clemson University Extension Service and Colleton Soil and Water Conservation District sponsored a Nuisance Wildlife Program in October 2005. The program addressed the increase in population and damage caused by beavers and feral swine. The speakers for the program were Mr. Jay Butfiloski, certified Wildlife Biologist, Furbearer Project Supervisor with the Department of Natural Resources; Mr. Noel E. Myers and Mr. Steve Smith with USDA APHIS Wildlife Service, and Dr. Greg Yarrow, Clemson Extension Wildlife Specialist.

2006 Conservation Partnership Conference

The SC Conservation Partnership Conference was held January 3-6, 2006 at Kingston Plantation in Myrtle Beach, SC. Each year representatives from SCACD, SWCS, SACDEA, NRCS and DNR meet to direct the future of the Partnership, to set policies for the State Association and learn about the latest in natural resource management. "Bridging the Gap" was the theme for this year's conference with the focus on bridging the gap between urban development and protection of rural areas. At the awards banquet Marion Rizer received a 20-year pin for his service with the Colleton Conservation District. Three Commissioners, Marion Rizer, I. M. Benton, and Roger Harriett, and the District Chaplain, Rev Gerald T. Mabry, represented the District.

2006 General Election ~ Blankenship and Harriett Seek Re-election

Deborah Blankenship and Roger Harriett are seeking re-election in the General Election to fill two elected Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioners positions in Colleton County. The election will be held November 7, 2006.

Each year conservation district commissioners volunteer thousands of hours promoting soil and water conservation practices in urban and rural areas, and combating erosion and storm water problems. Their tasks include planning and directing a conservation program, assigning priority to resource development and serving as a community clearinghouse for information and services on natural resource issues. Through a partnership with the federal and state agencies, technical, administrative and financial assistance is provided through conservation districts by the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (federal) and the S. C. Department of Natural Resources (state). Regular board meetings are held, usually monthly, for setting priorities and planning with the cooperating agencies' staff.

Both Deborah Blankenship and Roger Harriett understand the importance of conserving our natural resources. They are dedicated to helping educate students and landowners about conservation of our natural resources. Conservation district commissioners are non-salaried officials. If elected they will serve a 4-year term. Remember to vote in the November election.

In Memorial ~ I. N. Rizer

Mr. I. N. Rizer, a true Conservationist and a former Chairman of the Colleton Soil & Water Conservation District, passed away September 13, 2005. Mr. Rizer was an ardent supporter of the conservation of our Natural Resources. He worked to improve conservation in our state and to educate farmers and landowners about conservation practices. In August of 1970 he became an Associate Commissioner with the Colleton Soil and Water Conservation District. He was elected Chairman in August 1977 and served as Chairman until April 1985. I. N. also served as Director of Edisto-Savannah Valley Association and as Director of Willow Swamp Watershed. Mr. Rizer will be remembered for his service and his dedication to conservation.

Soil surveys began in 1899 as part of the nation's earliest efforts

on behalf of cooperative conservation. Soil survey maps were printed and bound into soil survey books that were free to the public at NRCS Field Offices. The soil survey books enabled farmers, landowners, land developers and others to make informed decisions concerning land use. These books are being phased out and replaced with an USDA Web Soil Survey Site that will provide secure public access to the national soils information system. Currently, NRCS has soil maps and data available on line for more than 95% of the Nation's counties. The site will be updated and maintained online as the single authoritative source of soil survey information. The soil survey site is a powerful way to access and analyze soils data that contributes to every aspect of public and private land use and development. To view the website visit <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>



Save ENERGY ~ Save MONEY

"The USDA Energy Initiative will help farmers and ranchers with high-energy costs and boost their bottom line. Many conservation measures can significantly reduce fuel use and other energy related costs. To help with this initiative, NRCS' new Energy Estimator gives farmers a quick read on how much money they can save by using conservation tillage. It's simple and easy-just three "clicks" on the computer. Producers enter their zip code, fuel costs, crop plans and acreage and the Energy Estimator calculated estimated costs for various conservation tillage options versus conventional tillage. Based on the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation tillage and cropping database, this new tool is available on the NRCS website at www.nrcs.usda.gov under the special NRCS Energy Campaign".

WAYS TO IMPROVE ENERGY COST

- Switch from conventional tillage to no-till
- Move to low-pressure irrigation systems
- Replace old or inefficient irrigation pumps
- Use manure instead of petroleum-based fertilizers
- Better manage nutrient and pesticide application through precision agriculture
- Improve pesticide use with scouting, spot spraying and integrated pest management
- Adopt management intensive grazing practices
- Plant windbreaks and shelterbelts to reduce heating and cooling costs





The Conservation District relies on NRCS to provide technical assistance to landowners in Colleton County. Assistance is provided with implementation of conservation practices such as wildlife and fishpond management, subsurface drainage, residue management, nutrient and pest management, prescribed grazing, and other technical practices, which may require engineering surveys and designs. Last year, NRCS assisted 1,047 customers with conservation issues concerning agriculture, forestry, wildlife, recreation, and engineering. NRCS is also involved with the administration of various cost share programs such as the WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program), the EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program), and the WRP (Wetland Reserve Program). In addition, NRCS provides technical assistance in the CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) and certain projects involving RC&D.

Cost-Share Programs

by Fred Tritapoe

Helping People Help the Land...

Conservation Reserve Program - CRP provides landowners with the opportunity to retire cropland in environmentally sensitive areas. The continuous sign-up allows for the establishment of wildlife areas, trees, filter strips, and riparian buffers. Concerning old contracts, Producers were given the option to re-enroll existing contract acreage for additional 10 years. NRCS provided planning assistance on 10 contracts covering 317 acres.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program - WHIP provides financial incentives to develop habitat for fish and wildlife on private lands. Cost share is available for such practices as prescribed burning, native cover management, tree planting, timber stand improvement, site prep, and natural regeneration. Colleton County has 9 landowners enrolled in the program for a total of 7,850 acres.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program - EQIP provides incentive payments up to 50% cost sharing for conservation practices such as no-till, microirrigation, erosion control structures, field borders, pasture and hayland practices, and animal waste facilities. In Colleton County there are currently 1,289 acres enrolled in this program. Under EQIP Funding, NRCS now has a Small Farmers Initiative. We have 2 farmers enrolled under this program. Costsharing items include but are not limited to microirrigation, no-till, prescribed grazing, fencing, heavy use area establishment, livestock watering system, and record keeping.

Wetland Reserve Program - WRP is a voluntary program to restore wetlands that have been converted or drained. Landowners can establish permanent conservation easements and in return receive payment on the agriculture value of the land as well as 100 percent of the cost of restoration.

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The Colleton Soil and Water Conservation District Board meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month except November. Please call 549-1821 (ext. 3) for more information.

Conservation Projects in Colleton County



Drip Tape Installation



Willow Swamp Pipe Installation



Pipe and Drip Tape Installation



Willow Swamp Pipe Crossing